

CLAIMS AMENDMENT

Claim 27 (Currently amended). A method of performing a determination of an item of interest in a sample using a single structure, the single structure having a first process path and a second path, and the second process path including a plurality of second process sub-paths, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) transferring a sample from outside a first container to inside the a first container in a first process path on the single structure;
- (b) separating an item of interest in the sample from the contents of the first container in the first process path;
- (c) transferring the separated item of interest in the sample from the first container in the first process path to a second container in at least one of the plurality of second process sub-paths of the second process path on the single structure;
- (d) bringing the contents of the second container to a first temperature different from a temperature of the first process path in the second process path; and
- ~~(d)~~ (e) detecting the item of interest in the second container in the second process path.

Claim 28 (Previously presented). The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:

- (f) sealing at least one of the first container and the second container.

Claim 29 (Previously presented). The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of:

- (g) removing the seal from at least one of the first container and the second container.

Claim 30 (Previously presented). The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:

(f) reducing exposure of contents of at least one of the first container and the second container to a contaminant.

Claim 31 (Currently amended). The method of claim 27 further comprising the step of:

(f) bringing the contents of the second container to a second temperature different from the first temperature in the second process path.

Claim 32 (Previously presented). The method of claim 27 further comprising the steps of:

- (f) transferring a second sample to a second first container in the process path;
- (g) adding a reagent to the second first container in the first process path;
- (h) transferring contents of the second first container to an optical flow cell on the single structure;
- (i) illuminating the optical flow cell; and
- (j) detecting the item of interest in the sample in the optical flow cell.

Claim 33 (Previously presented). The method of claim 27 wherein the sample is maintained at more than one temperature in the first process path.

Claim 34 (Currently amended). The method of claim ~~29~~ 27 wherein the first process path includes more than one temperature controller.

Claim 35 (Currently amended). A method of performing a determination of an item of interest in a sample using a single structure, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) transferring a sample from outside a container to inside the a container in a process path on the single structure, wherein the process path includes a plurality of sub-paths;
- (b) separating an item of interest in the sample from the contents of the container in the process path;
- (c) bringing the item of interest ~~contents~~ of the container to a first temperature in the process path;
- (d) transferring the container to at least one of the plurality of sub-paths;
- (e) bringing the item of interest ~~contents~~ of the container to a second temperature different from the first temperature in the process path; and
- (f) detecting the item of interest in the container in the process path.

Claim 36 (Currently amended). The method of claim 35 further comprising the step of:

- (g) reducing exposure of the item of interest ~~contents~~ of the container to a contaminant.

Claim 37 (Previously presented). The method of claim 35 wherein a determination of an item of interest comprises the steps of:

- (g) discerning determinations to be performed by the single structure;
- (h) sorting samples provided to the single structure by at least one common process; and
- (i) transferring the samples to the first process path in an order determined by sorting step (h).

Claim 38 (Previously presented). The method of claim 37 further comprising the step of:

- (i) allocating an element of the single structure to a given determination based on sorting step (h).